

Top 10 Culinary Tips During COVID

By Stefanie Sacks, MS, CNS, CDN

1. SPEAK UP

When shopping for food, don't be shy to speak with your grocer, tell them you have OI and are in need of specific nutrient rich foods. Kindly ask your grocer if he/she could put some items aside for you as stock comes in. Don't be shy!

2. SUBSTITUTE ESSENTIALS

If plain Greek yogurt is your calcium go-to and you can't find it, substitute with another brand of plain, Greek or a non-Greek option. Or opt into vanilla. If you can't find kale, go with collards or spinach. Fresh or frozen.

3. BE FLEXIBLE

During uncertain times, it's human nature to try to control what we can. What we eat is a go-to for many. However, food access right now is a real challenge for everyone. We must be flexible with ingredients and items and use this time as an opportunity to try new things.

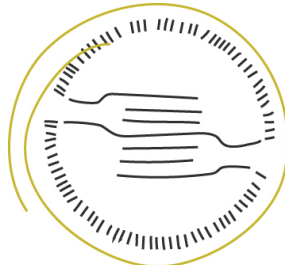
4. COOK

If you are an avid cook, you know what to do. If you don't like to cook, give it a try. Create a new healthy habit. Watch some Food TV, like [Ellie's Real Good Food](#), or find some cooking videos and dive in. Turn music on if you please to create a soothing and fun atmosphere. And even make it a family affair.

5. GO SIMPLE

For some this is a time to try that elaborate recipe in waiting. But for most, it's 3 meals a day and snacks so simple is in order. Do dishes that come easy, have simple ingredients and don't use a lot of pots and pans.

6. PLANNING + FREEZING



In an effort to streamline, plan a day a week where you cook in quantity then freeze. Soups and stews, breaded chicken cutlets, meatballs. You will have food for the week. Just add a vegetable and starch like rice, quinoa or potato and your plate is balanced.

7. SHARE RESPONSIBILITIES

Make cooking a family affair. Get help prepping, cooking, setting the table and cleaning. If you have kids, they will benefit from helping out in any way you deem necessary.

8. CELEBRATE GRATITUDE

Although times are difficult for everyone, celebrating gratitude daily is important. Kick off a Mindful Eating Mantra when you sit down for dinner. Take turns sharing: (1) Your worst part of the day; (2) Your best part of the day; and (3) What you are grateful for.

9. HOST A VIRTUAL DINNER PARTY

Many people are accustomed to eating out and sharing meals with friends and family. That does not have to stop. Set up a Zoom call with those you love. Cook together and eat together.

10. ORDER IN

Many restaurants are providing take-out food. Put your safety first of course but use the resources of your local food economy to stay nourished. Never forget that supporting local businesses is critical during this time.